

Using the NC DHHS Core LTC Service Evaluation Tools

Purpose

The 22 Core LTC Service Evaluation Tools (CSEs) were developed to assist your community in comprehensively evaluating specific LTC services as well as its overall LTC system. They are tools to encourage information sharing and data analysis, community discussions and action, and thoughtful review of where your community would like to go in the future and the barriers standing in the way of that vision. When used in conjunction with the CSE Matrix, your community can easily prioritize service-specific as well as overall LTC system issues that must be addressed.

CSE Tools were developed for the following services:

- Adult Day Care
- Adult Day Health
- Adult Protective Services
- Assistive Technology/Rehabilitation Technology
- Guardianship
- Dental Services
- Care Management
- Durable Medical Equipment
- Home-Delivered Meals
- Respite Care
- Home Health Care
- Hospice
- Housing and Home Improvement
- Medical Alert
- Information and Assistance
- In-Home Aide Services
- Mental Health Services
- Nursing Facility Care
- Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Social/Leisure/Recreational Services
- Transportation Services
- Vision Services

Tool Components

Each of the 22 CSE Tools were developed using the same format. To better explain the different components of the CSE Tools, an example has been provided on the next page:

A. Service { **XV. TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR OLDER AND DISABLED ADULTS**

B. Background Information

Primary Providers of Publicly Funded Transportation: _____
 Primary Funding Sources: _____
 Total Funding Last Fiscal Year: _____
 Consumers or Units Served Last Fiscal Year: _____

C. Dimension

A. EXISTENCE	
Are these services available to older and disabled adults in your community?	
1. Does your community have a public transit system?	Yes No
Overall Existence Rating	1 2 3 4 5

G. Overall Dimension Rating

C. Dimension

B. ADEQUACY	
Are these services in sufficient supply for those who need it?	
1. Is there an unmet need for human services transportation or public transportation?	Yes No
(How are unmet needs determined? Are there areas in your community that are not served by the transportation services? Why do these areas lack coverage? In addition to waiting lists and identifying unserved areas, are there any other indicators that there are/aren't enough transportation services in your community? Do public transit vans and buses have to turn away riders during busy periods of the day? If there is no documented unmet need for transportation services in your community, is it because everyone who qualifies gets services or because agencies do not keep waiting lists?)	
2. To what degree is transportation offered in the evening and night?	1 2 3 4 5
(Are evening/night services available? What are the days and hours of evening/night transportation services operation? Under what conditions are evening/night services cancelled/delayed?)	
Overall Adequacy Rating	1 2 3 4 5

D. Question

E. Measures

F. Question Rating Scales

Explanation of the Basic Tool Components

Below, the letters and explanations correspond to the letters on the Transportation example on the previous page:

A. Service

The Service component simply lists the service, or services, that the particular CSE Tool addresses. Note that the CSE Tools are used for evaluating services for both the older and younger disabled adult populations.

B. Background Information

At the beginning of each CSE Tool, several questions are asked to help your planning team conduct an extremely cursory environmental scan of the service, including acquiring basic background information necessary for understanding the facts about current operations of the service(s) being evaluated. All CSE Tools ask you to note the providers of the service(s), funding streams, total funding levels, and the number served per year. In addition, some CSE Tools ask more service-specific information such as cost per unit served. All publicly-funded, faith-based, volunteer, and private agencies/organizations/companies (including for-profit entities) that provide the service in your community should be included. Finding the answers to these questions will guide your community's team in determining which stakeholders must be consulted and included during the evaluation process. At a later date, your team may decide to solely look at publicly-funded agencies, or just at private companies – but during this initial environmental scan, it is recommended that all be “on the table” for consideration.

C. Dimension

Each CSE Tool is broken into six dimensions – Existence, Adequacy, Accessibility, Efficiency/Duplication, Equity, and Effectiveness/Quality – and all questions are placed in the one Dimension that it best fits. The six Dimensions encompass the major characteristics and broad LTC service issues that cut across all LTC services in North Carolina. When all six Dimensions are evaluated for a service, your team will have conducted a thorough and broad evaluation.

The six Dimensions and brief descriptions of each are below:

- A. Existence:** Are these services available to older and disabled adults in your community?
- B. Adequacy:** Are these services in sufficient supply for those who need it?
- C. Accessibility:** How obtainable are these services for those most in need?
- D. Efficiency/Duplication:** How reasonable are the costs of service? Are options for streamlining services available in the community?
- E. Equity:** How available are these services to all who need them without bias?
- F. Quality/Effectiveness:** How successful are these services in addressing consumers' needs?

Your team has great flexibility when it comes to the Dimensions. See the “Flexibility in Use” section below for more details.

D. Question

The Questions are the heart of the CSE Tools and are designed to instigate discussion and information/data-gathering. Your team should come to consensus on the rating of each question (Yes/No or 1/2/3/4/5 – see Letter F for more information) if at all possible. It is not necessary to go through the questions in order of appearance, but addressing all questions will give your community a more comprehensive evaluation of the service(s). Your community can employ great flexibility with the Question component – see the section on “Flexibility in Use” below for more information.

Along with service-specific questions, you will notice that several “generic” questions cut-across various services. For example, the question “If there are multiple providers of this service, to what extent do they work together to better serve consumers and accomplish joint projects” are found in almost all of the CSE Tools. The “generic” questions are questions that could be important no matter what service is being evaluated.

E. Measures

For most questions, a subset of question-specific measures was developed to guide your team in analyzing varying aspects of the question before assigning a rating. The measures are designed to help your team better define the issues, barriers, and program information that should be considered before giving a rating to the question. The measures were created to be both data-driven and experience-driven. Some measures can be easily answered by finding service-specific data at the local or state level. However, other measures rely on opinions and consumer input, general knowledge about your community’s services, and discussion among members to get to the heart of the matter. Not all measures will be able to be answered – they are merely a guide to shape your team’s thinking, information-collection, and decision-making process. Measures are not meant to slow down the process. Do not feel that your team must answer every single measure before moving-on – use what your community deems the most important measures and information to guide your data collection and/or rating decision-making process. As with the Question Component, your community can employ great flexibility with the Measures Component – see the section on “Flexibility in Use” below for more information.

F. Question Ratings

All Questions for the CSE Tools are written in such a way that your team can “rate” it based on where your community stands. The ratings are either a “Yes or No” answer or a rating scale of 1-5. Assigning a rating may be the most difficult part of the CSE Tool process as it requires group decision-making and consensus.

In layman's terms, for the questions that must be rated on a **scale of 1-5**:

Rating	Meaning
1	The “worst” rating. It means that your community's service either does not do what is asked in the question, or it actually has negative results.
2	Your community's service has a large amount of work to do still, although it does a small amount of what is asked in the question. Or, there is still a great need for improvement.
3	Neutral. The service does some of what is asked, but not completely. Or, the service does what is asked but there is still need for more effort or improvement.
4	The service meets the question or is almost there. It may also have some positive aspects that go further than the question asks.
5	This service is a best practice in regards to the question. It either fully meets the question or goes above and beyond what the question asks. The service can offer other providers information or ideas on improving their service in relation to the question.

The **“Yes or No” questions** in general ask about something that is concrete in measure – either the service does what is asked, or it doesn't, or the community has the service or it doesn't. In general:

Rating	Meaning
Yes	Generally means the service meets what the question is asking. A “Yes” answer will usually correspond to a 4 or a 5 on the 1-5 rating scale (4 if the service or your community meets the question, 5 if it exceeds the question).
No	Generally means the service does not meet what the question is asking. A “No” answer will usually correspond to a 1 or a 2 on the 1-5 rating scale (1 if the service or your community does not meet the question at all, a 2 if the service or your community meets it in a very limited way).

Exception to the Yes/No Rating: The only exception to the Yes/No scoring approach is a question under *Dimension B: Adequacy* for almost all CSE Tools:

Is there a waiting list or contact list for the service? Yes No

For this question, a “No” answer is actually the preferred answer, and should thus be considered a 4 or a 5, since it shows adequate amounts of service (unless there is no waiting list because there is no outreach being conducted).

G. Overall Dimension Rating

After your team has deliberated and rated the questions under a Dimension, the CSE Tool asks your team to determine an overall Dimension rating. Giving an overall rating for each Dimension will help your team later in prioritizing overall LTC systematic issues, especially when using the CSE Matrix to assist in priority-setting. Your team must come-up with its own approach for assigning an overall rating to each Dimension. It could give equal weight to each question and average the ratings for the questions under that specific Dimension to determine its overall rating. Or, if your team does not feel that each question in the Dimension should be given equal importance, it could “weight” questions and again do a simple average. Or, your team could just discuss the information it found during the evaluation of that Dimension and by group consensus determine an overall Dimension rating.

Last Page of Each CSE Tool

At the end of each CSE Tool, you will find a short table like this:

Recap of Overall Transportation Ratings					
Existence	1	2	3	4	5
Adequacy	1	2	3	4	5
Accessibility	1	2	3	4	5
Efficiency and Duplication	1	2	3	4	5
Equity	1	2	3	4	5
Quality/ Effectiveness	1	2	3	4	5

This chart is intended to provide a quick reference to all of the hard work your team has done on the previous pages. In completing the chart, simply transfer the Overall Dimension Rating (**Letter G. Above**) for each service Dimension to the chart. No additional work or evaluation is necessary – it’s just a tool to put all of the overall ratings in one place. It will be useful when filling-out the CSE Matrix (discussed below).

In addition to the Overall Ratings Chart, there are two sections on the last page:

1. Overall Service’s Major Strengths
2. Overall Service’s Areas for Improvement

These sections are designed to help your team identify the most pressing issues as well as the most successful components of the evaluated service. The answers may come directly from the CSE Tool questions or may be information your team found while looking for information to evaluate the service. Either way, it should provide a quick reference for your team in both the service-specific successes and barriers that should be kept in mind during the overall planning process.

Flexibility In Use

The CSE Tools were designed to be extremely flexible in nature to best serve the community using them. For example, your community can:

1. **Choose which services to evaluate.** As previously mentioned, there are currently 22 CSE Tools available for use. Undertaking a thorough review of all 22 services would be an extremely large undertaking for any community within any given year. Your community can determine the most pressing services or LTC issues (by survey, public forum, discussions, analyzing past efforts, etc.) and select the most important services to evaluate during the first year, and move onto other services in later years.
2. **Choose which dimensions to evaluate.** Your team may decide that instead of analyzing services, they would like to look at issues related to the overall LTC system in its community. For example, accessibility continues to be an important issue for most communities in regards to aging and disabled adult services. In that case, your team could decide to only evaluate the Accessibility Dimension for all of the 22 services and disregard the other 5 Dimensions. At the end of an evaluation such as that, your team will better understand the major barriers to accessibility as well as which services are most accessible, and which are least accessible.

Another example of Dimension flexibility is that your team may decide to evaluate specific services such as transportation and adult day care. However, they do not feel that Efficiency/Duplication is an important aspect of those services, or that they do not have time the first year to evaluate Efficiency/Duplication issues. Thus, they could complete the questions for all Dimensions except the Efficiency/Duplication Dimension for both services and look at Efficiency/Duplication in subsequent years.

3. **Choose which questions to evaluate.** Within each service and each Dimension, your team can determine which questions are important and which they do not feel are necessary to evaluate (it is highly suggested that your team determine this before evaluation activities and data collection begins). It may be that a question or two aren't relevant to the service in your community, or it may be that your team is not interested in the issue being assessed by the question.

In addition to deleting questions, your team should feel free to include questions they feel are important to the evaluation of that service (or Dimension) but that aren't currently

included. If your team does this, it is suggested that they keep the question(s) in a Yes/No or 1-2-3-4-5 rating format for consistency.

4. **Choose which measures to include.** As discussed, the measures for each question were developed based on what the State Team felt was important in comprehensively analyzing the question that the measure pertains to. However, your team may feel that some of the measures are unimportant, that you can't possibly find the information needed to answer the measure, or that they have other more important and telling measures that should be included. Remember, the measures are just a guide to help your team...feel free to change them to best accommodate your community's planning process.
5. **Choose your group rating method.** Coming to group consensus on the ratings for questions as well as overall Dimension ratings is most likely the hardest part of the CSE Tool. Your team should develop rules or guidelines for rating *before* they begin their evaluation activities. Averaging scores, weighted averaging, looking at number patterns, democratic voting, or simply group discussion are possible approaches. Whatever approach your team takes, it is imperative that it is decided on before evaluation activities and that all groups or subgroups follow the same procedure.

The Next Step: Matrix Evaluation

When your planning team has completed its evaluation of services, Dimensions, or both services and Dimensions, it is time to transfer the information onto the CSE Matrix.

The Matrix is a tool designed to put all of the evaluation activities your team has completed onto one easy-to-read page. It is intended to help your team quickly analyze and prioritize the most pressing LTC system Dimensions and barriers as well as the services for which your community needs to either further analyze or work on. In addition, the Matrix will allow you to quickly determine which LTC system Dimensions or services are "model" services or "best practices" and may have practices or policies that could be useful to other programs and services in your community.

The rows of the Matrix are the services, and the columns are the Dimensions. To complete the Matrix, simply transfer the Overall Dimension Ratings from the *Recap of the Overall Service Ratings* chart (last page of each CSE Tool) for each service that your team has evaluated to the Matrix row corresponding to that service. For example, if your team only completed the Transportation and Adult Day Care CSE Tools, with the following *Recap of the Overall Service Ratings* charts:

Recap of Overall Transportation Ratings						
Existence	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5	
Adequacy	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5	
Accessibility	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5	
Efficiency and Duplication	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>	
Equity	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>	
Quality/ Effectiveness	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5	

Recap of Overall Adult Day Care Ratings						
Existence	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5	
Adequacy	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5	
Accessibility	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>	
Efficiency and Duplication	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5	
Equity	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5	
Quality/ Effectiveness	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5	

The Matrix for the two services would look like this:

Sample Matrix for Transportation and Adult Day Care

Service	Overall Existence Rating	Overall Adequacy Rating	Overall Accessibility Rating	Overall Efficiency/ Duplication Rating	Overall Equity Rating	Overall Effectiveness/ Quality Rating	Service Average
Transportation	3	2	4	5	5	4	3.83
Adult Day Care	1	2	5	1	2	1	2.00
Dimension Average	2.0	2.0	4.5	3.0	3.5	2.5	N/A

The Matrix is an Excel Document and is set-up to automatically calculate the Service Average and the Dimension Average. To download the Matrix, go to the NC DHHS Long-Term Care web page at <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/ltc/localplanning.htm> and click on the Matrix Icon beneath the Core Service Evaluation Tools section.

The sample Matrix above tells us several things in a quick and easy-to-read manner:

Service Analysis: Allows your team to analyze service-specific information

On the example above:

- Transportation Services scored much higher than Adult Day Care Services for this community. If the community were prioritizing which service to reform first, it would probably consider looking further into Adult Day Care before looking at Transportation. This however assumes that the services hold equal weight in terms of importance to the community. If Transportation is felt to be an extremely important service (and therefore the community feels it should score in the 5's), the community may decide to continue its evaluation and strategy development for Transportation, even though it scored close to 4, to bring the service up to ideal conditions.
- As a caution, your team should delve further into the Matrix than simply analyzing the average scores. Although Transportation scored pretty high overall, it still has a score of 2 for the Overall Adequacy Rating. If this community was interested in improving adequacy of services, or just in improving Transportation overall, it might consider further evaluating the adequacy of Transportation and develop strategies for improvement.
- Another example of looking past the averages - Even though Adult Day Care scored relatively low overall, it scored a 5 for Overall Accessibility. The community might take a look at what Adult Day Care is doing "right" in terms of accessibility and use the policies, programs, and ideas as examples for other services that have had issues with successful accessibility.

Dimension Analysis: Allows your team to analyze broad LTC issues that cut-across all LTC services

On the example above:

- Overall, this community's LTC system (in this case, just Transportation and Adult Day Care) is doing really well in terms of Accessibility to LTC services (with a 4.5 average rating) and is doing ok with Equity issues (with a 3.5 average rating).
- Overall, this community needs to work on the Existence of LTC services in the community (with a 2.0 average rating), Adequacy of its LTC services (with a 2.0 average rating), and the Effectiveness and Quality of its LTC services (with a 3.0 average rating). If the sample community was looking to address broad, overarching issues with its LTC system, these might be the ones it would start with.
- Again, your team should look beyond just using the average scores and look at the actual number patterns within the Matrix. For example, within the Equity Dimension (overall Dimension average rating of a 3.5), Transportation scored a 5 while Adult Day Care scored a 2. The policies and practices employed by the Transportation providers related to service Equity might be helpful to the Adult Day Care providers in increasing the Equity of their own services.

Other Cautions in Using the Matrix

The Service averages and the Dimension averages are just tools to help your community analyze and prioritize its LTC services and overall system. **The averages should not be used as the**

only method of analysis. The sample community above may feel that Accessibility and Equity are the most important barriers for consumers in their LTC system. However, both Accessibility and Equity scored the highest average Dimension score (4.5 and 3.5 respectively). The community should not feel bound to look only at the Dimensions that scored low (i.e. Dimensions they did not feel were most important) just because the average scores were low. Instead, they should continue with the community's priorities and work to increase Accessibility and Equity of services first. Just because a score is high doesn't mean that it is high enough for your community. In addition, just because a score is low doesn't mean it has to be the most important issue that your team works on in the coming year. These are decisions your community must make for itself.

In addition, when computing the final service averages or Dimension averages, the Matrix assumes that all services are equally important. If your community feels certain services or Dimensions are more important than others and assigns extra "weight" to them, the average function in the Matrix will not represent your community's weighting structure and you will need to either change the averaging formula in the Excel spreadsheet (to a weighted formula), compute the weighted average by hand, or develop a new spreadsheet. The averaging function will work, however, if your community simply decides to eliminate whole Dimensions or entire services from its evaluation. Just leave the boxes/cells blank and nothing else is required. The averages will be computed by the spreadsheet based only on the information you have entered.

The Tools' Relationship to Your Community's Planning Process

The Core Service Evaluation Tools and the Matrix Tool are designed to help your community fully evaluate its LTC services and the broader components of the entire LTC system by researching information and finding local data, instigating discussion, and helping to bring about consensus. From this evaluation process, it is expected that a number of priority issues and areas of concern regarding your community's LTC system will evolve – issues that your community will likely address in its strategic plan for LTC reform. Your community may find strategies for your strategic plan directly from the research and discussions that came about by completing the CSE Tools. We hope that you will find these tools helpful in unearthing and prioritizing the local barriers and issues standing in the way of a comprehensive, effective, efficient, and consumer-friendly LTC system.

For Further Information, Suggestions, or Questions

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